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School Committee Minutes 12/11/2007

Approved January 8, 2008

THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2007

7:30 P.M.

Present:

Susan Lovelace, Chair
Sean Garballey, Vice Chair
Jeff Thielman, Secretary

Denise Burns
Joe Curran
Ronald Spangler

Superintendent: Nate Levenson
Asst. Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie
Chief Financial Off: Sue Mazzarella
Interim Sp. Ed. Dir: Gerald Kupperschmidt

Absent: Sue Sheffler

Student Rep: Callie McHugh
Student Rep: Bobby McWatters

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Joseph Curran, School Committee member spoke about his concerns in which the School Committee and Superintendent have conducted business since he was elected. Mr. Curran has asked the committee to provide every School Committee member timely documentation of all legal expenses, have the Cost Containment manager examine all legal billings to date and try to reduce the legal expenses and have such report be prepared and distributed one week prior to our next School Committee meeting. Mr. Curran requests that the superintendent review and update budget material on the School Department's website.

Mr. Jack Duranceu, parent, Teacher and AEA President stated he cannot be silent over the events of the summer. Mr. Duranceu questioned the delay for arbitration for the Ottoson teacher and principal, the denial of unemployment benefits to each of them and the future impact on teacher's positions with the high cost of all the legal fees for the upcoming budget.

CONSENT AGENDA – all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

*Approval of Warrant # 08073 dated 11/27/2007 amount \$535,513.32

*Approval of Regular Minutes from November 27, 2007

*Approval of China Trip on July 16-28, 2008

On a motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Mr. Garballey it was voted to approve the consent agenda with an amendment from Mr. Curran to remove the approval of the China Trip on July 16-28, 2008 from the consent agenda.

Vote 5-1, Mr. Burns abstained

Mr. Curran and Ms. Burns asked respectively if we supplement the trip and if we make any money on trips. Superintendent Levenson responded that the trips are self supported and any money earned help pays for the stipend position to run such trips and support scholarships for students in need.

On a motion by Mr. Spangler and seconded by Mr. Curran it was voted to approve The China Trip on July 16-28, 2008.

Vote: 6-0 unanimous

RECOGNITION

Ms. Lovelace acknowledged the many Arlington High School music students: Otto Briner, Renne Delgado, Miranda Forman, Olivia Munson, Mary Rab, Katrina Rosenberg, Amanda Strominger, Stephen Carmody, David Meir and Sonai Ran, Luke Paulino and Karsten Koenig whom were accepted into the Northeast District Ensembles.

Ms. Lovelace congratulated Emily Pillimer, a senior, who was recently featured in the Boston Globe and the Boston Herald for soccer as an All Scholastic player.

Mr. Spangler was very impressed with the recent concert performed at the high school last week and thanked Mr. Tassone, staff and students on an outstanding performance.

SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE

Jerry Kupperschmidt gave an update on the changes on the 6th floor Special Education office. He pointed out how Georgia Chute and Ellette DiPietro continue to oversee the schedules, student's needs and to keep on top of the timelines for the department. Ellette DiPietro spoke about the new programs and has received positive feedback from teachers and noted that the needs for students are increasing. Nancy Campbell spoke about the students who are out of district and in-group homes and the impact this has on our special education budget and on our case loads. Also noted that the social worker and the Walker Partnership are working out wonderfully for the students.

EXECUTIVE SESSION Level III grievance(s)

*On a motion by Mr. Garballey and seconded by Ms. Burns it was
Voted to move Pending Litigation to our Executive Session
Vote: 6-0 unanimous*

Ms. Lovelace entertained the motion to enter into Executive Session and Mr. Curran seconded.

*Roll Call: Mr. Spangler Yes, Mr. Curran Yes, Ms. Burns Yes, Mr. Thielman Yes, Mr. Garballey Yes, and Ms. Lovelace Yes.
Vote: 6-0 unanimous*

SUBCOMMITTEE

District Accountability

*On a motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Mr. Spangler it was
Voted to approve the District Goals Accountability Scoring grid for 2007-2008.
Vote 6:0 motion passes unanimously*

Mr. Thielman noted that no future meetings dates for the District Accountability Subcommittee have been planned.

Budget

*Mr. Garballey moved to have the School Committee endorse the Budget time line for FY 09 and was seconded by Mr. Curran
Vote 6:0 motion passes unanimously.*

Mr. Garballey also noted that the Budget timeline will be available online.

Policy & Procedures: First Readings

Mr. Spangler presented the following policies for a First Reading

LBC-R RELATIONS WITH HOME SCHOOLS, change date

BDFA-E CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCILS BUSINESS, recoding as BDFA and renaming it "School Councils" and aligning the scope of the new BDFA to the scope of MGL 71:59C

BDFA-E-1 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, consolidating with BDFA-E-2 into a single revised BDFA-E-1 titled "School Improvement Plan, adding, per subcommittee discussion the provisions that the committee received (but not approve) these plans each year.

BDFA-E-2 SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, eliminating the old file.

THOMPSON BUILDING UPDATE

Superintendent Levenson gave an update on the report received from the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The MSBA has created the list of schools to be funded or considered for funding and it does not include a full rebuild of the Thompson, Stratton, or High School. The Thompson School was classified as "Additional Planning Required. In a few months the State will work with Town and School administration to discuss the process of proving our need for upgrades and preparing the next steps. Superintendent Levenson will continue to keep everyone informed as he learns more.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Mr. Spangler it was

Voted to move the 11 o'clock rule to 11:15 pm

Vote 6:0

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Levenson noted if anyone had questions on the superintendent's report they should be directed to him.

SECRETARY REPORT

Mr. Thielman reported on correspondence of a newsletter received from the Bishop School.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Garballey brought up the concerns for safety at the schools, especially the Ottoson Middle School and noted he had received many calls due the slippery sidewalks. Mr. Levenson had received similar concerns, had addressed this with DPW and the custodial supervisor and will continue to work with both departments to improve the safety for all students.

ADJOURN

On a motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Mr. Spangler it was voted

To adjourn at 11:11 pm

Vote: 6:0 unanimous

Submitted by

Karen Fitzgerald

Administrative Assistant

School Committee